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ABSTRACT

Intended for parents and teachers who are interested in the approximate level at which their primary school-age children should be writing, this document describes the type of writing children at each age can produce and how they go about producing it. An introduction makes this point and offers a set of writing process terms to describe compositions written in the writing process method: (1) rehearsing; (2) drafting; (3) conferring; (4) revising; (5) editing; and (6) publishing. It then provides an overview of the paper and explains the "invented spelling" used in the paper. Four sections follow, labeled "Kindergarten," "First Grade," "Second Grade," and "Third Grade." The sections describe the characteristics of student writing at each grade level and students' attitudes toward composing, the appearance of the product, developmental problems exhibited by each grade level, the students' writing processes, and appropriate levels of expectations for each grade. Each section also offer samples of student work. In the "Kindergarten" section it is noted that students often use drawings as a springboard for writing. In the "First Grade" and "Second Grade" sections students are described as enthusiastic about writing, and it is noted that drawings take up less room than in earlier compositions. The third grade section notes that students' work generally loses its "voice" and becomes lifeless as children become more interested in appearance, order, and mechanical correctness. (JC)

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ED284206

On Writing

Expectations K-3

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April, 1986

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FORWARD

Many people have contributed to these writing expectations: In 1982 Ann Faude and Steve Frantz wrote the first draft. All teachers of kindergarten through third grade had the opportunity to review that draft and more than a dozen participated in critique sessions. Over the next few years writing changed as teachers and children gained more skills and experience with the process approach to writing.

In 1986 Adele Fiderer revised the original draft to include the changes teachers observed. Many classroom teachers critiqued this version, and responded generously to requests for materials and ideas by sending sample writings and comments. Teachers' suggestions have been invaluable.

We will continue to solicit staff and community reaction to these writing expectations.

WRITING EXPECTATIONS K-3

INTRODUCTION

Writing in the early school years is the best of times. Teachers marvel anew each year at the energy and exhilaration they see when young children write.

The stories that teachers tell about the writing that their students produce and the ways that they go about writing help us see similarities and differences between various grade levels.

Writing begins in kindergarten when symbols, letters, and words appear beside and within large colorful drawings. It continues on in first grade with an increase in the length of the text and the number of phonetic spellings as the drawings diminish in size.

In second grade the writing appears to leap off the page fueled by exuberant feelings, dialogue, and details. The seven-year-old, who writes the way he speaks, now has greater control over his fine motor movements, and the physical act of writing is easier for him.

In third grade this carefree fluency is reined in by writers who have become aware of correctness. The eight-year-old, afraid to risk failure, writes briefer pieces in a literal, matter-of-fact style for a time. Then he begins to deliberately add and change parts, exhibiting a new found power over writing --- that of revision.

This document attempts to show what children in each of these grades can do when they write. It may provide answers to the parent who asks, "Is my child writing as well as a second grader should?"

Teachers, too, may find Expectations K-3 helpful as it offers them a broad view of writing across the Scarsdale School District. They can find out what goes on in classrooms at their own grade levels, and see what writing looks like in earlier and later years, as well.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The writing products or compositions that we describe and include in this document were developed in classrooms through the writing process approach. The following description of writing process terms may be helpful to readers who are not familiar with this instructional method.

Rehearsing: Children rehearse what they plan to write by talking, drawing or thinking about it first. Rehearsal occurs over and over again. After the child writes one idea on paper, he rehearses what he will write next.

Drafting: In this stage of the process, the writer tries to get his ideas on to paper as quickly as possible. Knowing that spelling doesn't matter and that writing can be "messy" frees the writer to do this.

Conferring: Writers receive feedback on what they have written in their drafts in conferences with the teacher, and occasionally with peers. The feedback is usually in the form of questions which encourage the children to tell more about their topic or to clarify something they've written.

Revising: After conferring, students make changes in their texts by adding and deleting words and information. Sometimes they will cut apart the text with scissors to insert a piece of paper with additional information on it, or to reorder events in the text.

Editing: When writers are satisfied that their pieces are interesting, clear, and contain sufficient information, they attend to the conventions of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

Publishing: Writers share their completed pieces with an audience. This may involve recopying or typing by the child or teacher, or the child may simply read aloud his story to classmates during a "sharing" time following the writing period.

THE DESIGN OF THE CONTENTS

Expectations K-3 contains descriptions of the content and appearance of compositions, the writing process of students, signs of learning-in-progress, levels of expectations within each grade level and writing samples. An explanation of the kind of information to be found within each of these topics follows:

Content characteristics and product appearance: This section describes the final product, the completed composition, the kind of topics students choose to write about, length of the text, qualities of good writing, letter formation and spacing, and relationship of text size to picture size.

Writing Process: Here we see the way children of a particular grade level go about the business of writing - rehearsing, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing or publishing.

Signs of Learning in Progress: As children develop new skills, new problems appear in their writing. Learning to write involves experimentation and risk taking, and errors often result. We describe some of these errors and explain the new learning or awareness that leads children to make them.

Levels of Expectations: There is a wide range of writing abilities within each grade. This document describes four levels of students' abilities for each grade, with level four representing the maximum skills we can expect to see, and level one, the minimum.

Teachers and parents can use these descriptions to assess a sample of writing, keeping the following points in mind:

A range exists within each of the four levels. For example, one piece of writing may be a high level three, another, a low level three.

A piece of writing may reflect skills of more than one level.

The levels of expectations should be used to assess a piece of writing, not a writer. A student, like a professional writer, rarely produces all compositions or equal quality. Some stories are better than others.

Writing Samples: The writing samples that follow each grade's expectations illustrate the four levels of abilities described for that grade.

Parents may wonder about misspellings they see in these samples and in the writing of all primary age children. Current research uses the term "invented spelling" to refer to the misspellings children make before they know the rules adults use to spell, often before they can read. This example shows us how a first grader uses invented spellings to tell an exciting story:

The dinousoo gets revenj

stegusawrs autakt alsawis
then the fling reptile cam fling donw and hul upt alsawis
he pikt up steggusawris and drope hime into the volkanole
and now he was hlplise But then hlp cums lukely
Triserutops to the reskQ!

The decoded text reads:

The Dinosaur Gets Revenge

Stegosaurus attacked Allosaurus. Then the flying reptile came flying down and helped Allosaurus. He picked up Stegosaurus and dropped him into the volcano. And now he (Stegosaurus) was helpless. But then help comes, luckily. Triceratops to the rescue!

We encourage youngsters to invent spellings for several reasons. First invented spelling allows them to develop fluency and liveliness of their writing. Children who are concerned about correct spellings write fewer words and less interesting texts. The effort of perfecting each word causes children to forget what they wanted to say, to end their stories as quickly as possible, and to use only safe words that they know how to spell.

Secondly, research tells us that invented spelling does not interfere with children's mastery of conventional spelling. Indeed, the problem solving process that occurs as children struggle to sound out the words they write, aids the acquisition of successful spelling strategies.

We hope that Scarsdale parents and teachers will find Expectations K-3 a useful way of looking at the writing of young children, but it is likely that this document, like most drafts, will change as we learn more about writing and writers.

Adele Fiderer
Scarsdale Public Schools
April 1986

kindergarten

There are few learning experiences that rival the excitement and accomplishment of kindergarten writing.

Kindergarten children who have had no previous formal writing experiences and do not read, want to and can write. They need a climate of trust and a place where risk taking is welcomed. They begin to write when a teacher assures them, "You don't have to know how to read to write stories."..."You're not supposed to know how to spell yet." "You can write the words the way they sound or feel to you and I'll help you fix them up later."

Kindergarteners love to write. Each writing experience is a sort of social event, characterized by drawing, talking, and writing. We have tossed out our old ideas about the limited attention span of the very young child because we see these children writing and drawing and talking for as long as forty-five or fifty minutes.

Upward mobility is the name of the game in kindergarten. As these children continue to write often, with or without instruction, they develop new skills.

CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS

1. Pieces range from picture labels to complete stories.

2. There is a strong relationship between drawing and writing.

3. Children chose their own topics readily although some children, inspired by a friend's topic, will occasionally make it their own. Favorite themes for many are rainbows and hearts; they frequently write about personal things - illness, holidays, vacations, family, - whatever is immediate. They write fiction to enter the world of make believe - outerspace adventure, ghost or monster stories, or television-inspired plots.

4. Kindergarteners write in a variety of forms for different purposes: letters, menus, signs, responses to teacher assigned topics such as a class trip, Mother's Day, or an experience shared by the class.

5. Invented spellings indicate growing understandings of the sound-symbol relationships of English.

6. Many beginning writers are aware of, and experiment with the conventions of writing: lines running from right to left, spaces between words, capital and lower case letters, and a variety of punctuation marks.

PRODUCT APPEARANCE

1. Writing usually contains a drawing; the drawing diminishes in dominance as the text increases throughout the year.

2. Generally letters are written quite large. Children usually will write more if they can write smaller letters. Letter formation, size, and spacing vary from piece to piece.

3. Text may be written vertically or horizontally. Young children will let words fill empty spaces on a page. They tend to use the whole page.

4. Paper selected by kindergarteners varies in size, shape, color and lines. Some children will write more on unlined paper. They also tend to write more if pages have been stapled or folded together as "books" than they will on separate sheets.

5. Kindergarteners love to experiment with writing implements. They write with crayons, pens, pencils, markers - even typewriters or word processors if they are available.

6. Pieces vary in the number of words. Topic choice usually affects how much a child wants to say about a subject.

SIGNS OF LEARNING IN PROGRESS - DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS

1. Pieces contain many phonetic or invented spellings.

2. Drafts contain a mixture of lower and upper case letters.

3. Although they do not use punctuation at the end of sentences, they pause at the end of each sentence when reading aloud. They have a sense of a complete thought.

4. Their written thoughts are frequently incomplete. They write for themselves, not an anticipated audience.

5. When kindergarteners first attempt to generate longer texts, many begin to do this by listing events, beginning each "sentence" the same way: "I got candy and
I got lollipop and
I got gum"

The repetition of the first few words for each thought reduces the necessity for constant invention. Repeating a pattern makes writing very much like filling in slots.

WRITING PROCESSES

Rehearsing

For the five-year-old drawing is a rehearsal for writing. The child seldom verbalizes plans in advance of drawing; he knows what he will write after he begins to draw. So topic choice is usually firm for kindergarteners. While drawing, the child is happy to talk about the picture with his teacher. The writing follows this verbalization. Rehearsal continues throughout the writing period with more drawing, more talk, more writing.

Drafting

Kindergarten children cannot write as fast as they can think. As a result they may omit words or repeat words as they put their ideas onto paper. Some children intersperse drawing with writing; most complete a drawing before they begin to write.

As some children write, they struggle to spell the words by saying them aloud and prolonging or repeating specific sounds they hear. They may refer to alphabet picture cards if available or ask a friend for help.

Other children write without concern for correct spelling. They write as quickly as they can, sometimes drawing a line after a beginning consonant to indicate they know there are missing letters in the word. They are willing to postpone spelling concerns until they've completed writing.

Children usually talk about their stories to one another while drafting. For kindergarteners, writing is a kind of social event that gives them the energy to draw, write, and talk for as long as 45 minutes in a single session.

Revising

Many beginning writers revise words or letters naturally; crossing out, erasing, starting over. While reading their story aloud, some realize a "word" has been omitted or repeated. They are often willing to squeeze a word into the text or cross out words. Kindergarteners usually do not add more than a word or two independently.

If after responding to a teacher's question, a child discovers he has omitted an important idea, he is usually willing to add the new information to the end of the text.

Editing

Kindergarten writers rarely edit their pieces. A child may see all or part of the text correctly edited after he has read it to his teacher. If the invented spellings would not be decodable at a later time and the meaning of the story would be lost, the teacher transcribes all or part of the text in small print on the page.

When children write frequently, even without direct instruction and without teacher correction, spelling, vocabulary and syntax continue to improve significantly.

Sharing

Kindergarten children like to read their stories to all kinds of audiences - small or large. They will read the same story again and again to different people. Usually they read their own invented spelling (with some accuracy) rather than looking at the teacher's transcriptions. Most five-year-olds can recall topics they wrote about throughout the year as a result of this sharing process.

LEVELS OF EXPECTATIONS: WHAT KINDERGARTENERS KNOW AND DO WHEN THEY WRITE

Level 4

Expresses more meaning in the text than in the drawing

Writes interesting and imaginative narratives that occasionally reflect the style and language of stories the child has read or heard

Develops a narrative with some sense of a beginning, a middle and an ending

Occasionally uses dialogue

Often connects a sequence of ideas with "and"

Creates a title that reflects the focus of the story

Spells many words correctly, often using suffixes s, ed, and ing appropriately

Often completes a story over two or more days

Demonstrates an awareness of punctuation by occasionally using it appropriately or inappropriately

Makes mechanical errors that do not interfere with communication at a later time

Level 3

Uses approximately equal portions of the page for drawing and writing

Expresses more meaning in the text than in the drawing

Develops a brief narrative based on a sequence of events

Writes a title that relates to some part of the narrative

Frequently uses medial consonants and vowels in addition to beginning and ending consonants

Demonstrates an awareness that additional letters are needed to correctly spell a word

Separates words with spaces

Shows an awareness of sentence sense by occasionally writing one complete thought on a page

Demonstrates a growing knowledge of correctly spelled words that includes frequently used words such as: and, it, to, the, a, we, I, he

Frequently chooses lined paper for writing

Occasionally extends a story line with additional pages after responding orally to questions

Is able to decode invented spelling after writing; mechanical errors may interfere with communication of meaning

Often will continue the same story on the following day

Level 2

Allots some portion of space on the paper to letters above, alongside or below the predominant drawing

Uses a beginning consonant to represent a word; the consonant may correspond to the actual spelling or to the phonetic spelling (f for ph)

Occasionally uses a final consonant or a vowel

Rarely leaves spaces between clusters of letters where words should begin and end

Demonstrates an awareness that letters have a uniform size and shape; uses upper and lower case letters of similar size randomly

Demonstrates an awareness of the linearity of writing by placing lines of "words" below the preceding lines if sufficient space surrounds the drawing

Writes a few correctly spelled words such as: his or her name, love, mom, dad, cat, dog, hi

Decodes many of the invented spellings immediately after writing

Frequently adds several "words", represented by letters, following a verbal response to questions about the drawing; occasionally will continue writing a story on the following day

Level 1

Makes large drawings that dominate the page

Demonstrates an awareness that marks or symbols can be written to represent spoken words

Occasionally inserts one or two letters within the drawing as labels to represent who or what a figure in the drawing represents

Invents scribble writing or symbols with a letter-like quality that do not relate to any sounds in the words they are supposed to represent

Is familiar with a few letters of the alphabet, particularly those in his or her name

Writes letters or scribbles in a way that shows an awareness of the horizontal nature of writing

Uses one or two symbols to represent an entire sentence or several sentences

Generates symbols in response to questions and encouragement

Usually begins a new paper each "writing" session; rarely wishes to complete work begun the day before

Occasionally completes more than one page of drawing and "writing" in one session

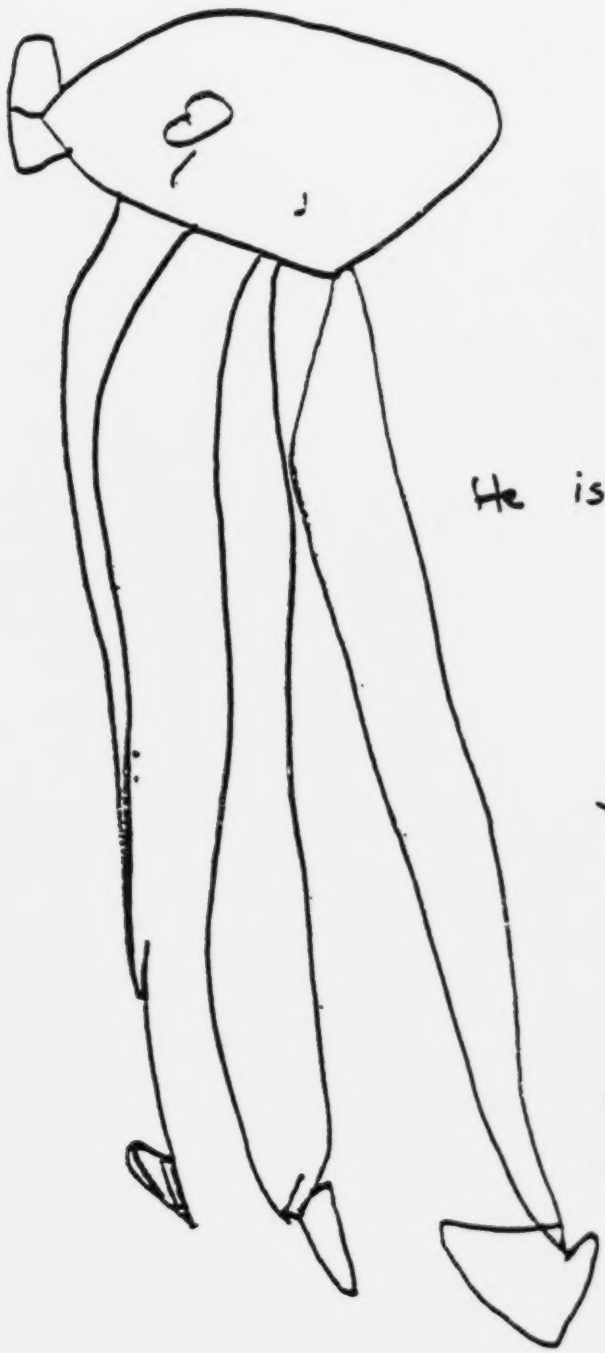
Occasionally relates two or more pages to the same topic

WRITING SAMPLES

The following writing samples demonstrate what our kindergarten pupils can do when they write. Because the sample representing level four had nine pages, we reduced them to fit on two pages. The title page was reproduced to show the actual size of the paper and the child's printing.

10/10

Level 1



He is eating meat.

Because of his pointy feet, he has hind feet.

Because of his very sharp teeth, he can chew that meat very easily.

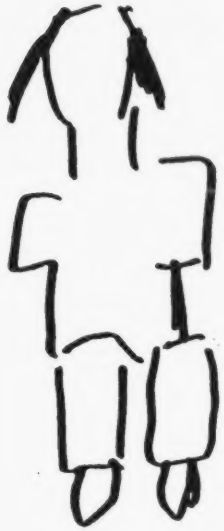
LiSA HI

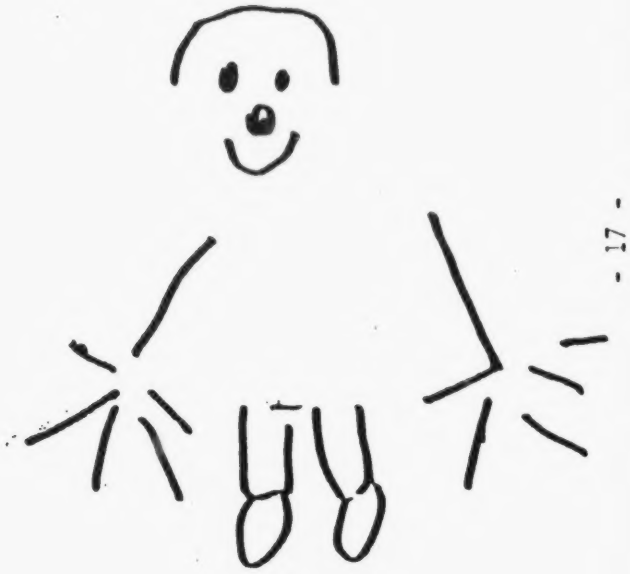
BH

IT

Me it

I PLN TH SNO WM BRTHR WE M
DA SHOS





Level 2

I played in the snow with my brother.

We made a snow house.

My Mom's friend asked me to be her flower girl.

I said "Yes"

My dad came home and I told my dad the news. He was happy.

We ate dinner.

Level 4

~~The sup~~ Th
litle egg
by Jenny 5/3

Oun day i
aet att sit
to Play i
sus a little
egg i woti

One day I went outside to play i saw a little egg i wantec ...

to see wot cit of egg it wos. wos it a chik egg? no. wos it a dos egg? no. Wot cit of egs wos it? wos it a cat a pir egg? no. i ~~tet~~ thet and

- 1 -

to see what kind of egg it was. was it a chick egg? no. was it a ducks egg? no. What kind of egg was it? Was it a caterpillar egg? no i thought and ...

~~Tot~~. ter. i got a id ~~was~~ it a bac of brt egg? wt cit of brt. ~~Now i hae to fis it att i tat and i tat and i sat a~~

- 2 -

thought, then I got a idea, was it a kind of bird egg? What kinc of a bird egg? What kind of bird? now I have to figure out I thought and I thought and I got a ...

Id ~~t~~ was it a robin stot? no. wos it a babg blw brt? yes. It is a baby blw brt i sat att wt cit of egg taty was.

- 3 -

idea Was it a robins egg? no was it a baby blue bird? yes It is a baby blue bird I figured out what kind of egg that was

Own dag it hasht. it was a baby blu brt i lice it I brot it hom with me i Plag with it. it grw up i let it fre.

- 4 -

One day it hatched It was a baby blue bird I liked it I brought it nome with me I played with it. it grew up I let it free

First Grade

Children bring with them into first grade abilities gained through their kindergarten experiences with writing. Rarely will a child be at the picture-labeling stage; most will be able to write "stories" made up of a brief sentence or phrase that describes the drawing.

By the middle of the year most first graders can write longer pieces with clarity and a genuine sense of completeness. Along the way it is quite reasonable to expect some of their writing to lack complete thoughts, be repetitious and often be very incoherent - except to the child (and sometimes the teacher).

CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS

1. Pieces range from one or two sentences (without punctuation) to complete stories.

2. Drafts are longer and more detailed. Pieces range in length from three or four lines to one hundred lines.

3. Children write more on unlined paper than on lined paper. They write more when several sheets of paper are folded or stapled together as a "book" than on separate sheets of paper.

4. Through the course of the year, one of the most observable changes is the decreasing presence of drawings at the prewriting or rehearsal stage.

5. Generally pieces are easier to understand and reflect a beginning sense of completeness.

6. Most personal narratives are chronologically organized beginning with the earliest event in the day and ending with the last --- otherwise known as the bed-to-bed story.

7. Children frequently choose to write about their personal experiences. Writing about things and people they know helps them write with more coherence, feeling and fluency. Common topics include family, pets, siblings, friends, vacations, and birthdays.

8. Some children prefer fiction writing. They write stories about their favorite toy, animal and TV character, also monsters and ghosts. Others retell their favorite stories in their own words. These fictional pieces often reflect some of the rich language and style found in books the child has read and heard.

PRODUCT APPEARANCE

1. Writing done early in the year usually contains a dominant drawing which serves as a rehearsal or springboard for the writing. As the year progresses many children do not draw at all or they draw after writing to illustrate their text. The text has a complete unity of its own and no longer depends on the drawing to communicate meaning.

2. Generally letters are written quite large. Letter formation and spacing has begun to conform to standard conventions.

3. Drafts are often very messy.

DEVELOPMENTAL ERRORS - LEARNING IN PROGRESS

1. As first graders attempt to bring words from their speaking vocabulary into their writing vocabulary, they continue to use phonetic or invented spelling. Correct spellings increase measurably throughout the year.

2. The same word may be spelled in different ways throughout the story.

3. Listing is the first step many young writers take as they try to generate longer texts. Frequently, first grade writing is a listing of thoughts about a central idea.

4. First graders must now deal with fify two symbols for the upper and lower case letters of the alphabet. Their drafts show an unconventional mixture of upper and lower case letters as the youngsters struggle to apply their new learning.

5. Generally their writing consists of simple sentence patterns: "I was at the beach. I was in a boat. A big wave hit the boat. I fell out."

6. Like kindergarteners, first graders write for themselves, not an anticipated audience. They also assume the reader knows the subject as well as they do. Consequently, the writing of many first graders lacks sufficient information for readers and may end abruptly.

7. These children have recently become aware of the multitude of conventions that accompany written texts. As they experiment with some of the mechanics of writing, they frequently omit, or use incorrectly, periods and capitals. More sophisticated punctuation marks appear - such as quotation marks or apostrophes. They are sometimes used appropriately.

8. First graders know what they want to write. Developmental problems with motor control prevent them from getting their ideas on to paper as quickly as they come to mind. As they struggle to keep track of their thoughts when they write, they often omit words or they repeat words and phrases.

WRITING PROCESS

Rehearsing

For first graders rehearsal is more typically characterized by verbal expression than by drawing. They decide what they will write about before they draw or talk, unlike the kindergarten child who lets the drawing lead him to his topic.

Most first graders rehearse by telling a story to the teacher or other children, or by talking a story through while drawing a picture. Over the course of the year, many simply begin to write after thinking about their topic.

Rehearsal occurs over and over again throughout the drafting process. After one idea has been written, the child rehearses what he will say next, by talking or drawing or thinking.

Drafting

The first grade writer has three critical issues to contend with during the drafting process: getting his ideas on to the paper as quickly as he can think, holding and controlling a pencil to produce conventional upper and lower case letters, and producing clusters of letters that will represent the words

he means to say. Knowing that he can write "messy" and that spelling doesn't matter on a first draft, frees him to get his ideas on to the paper. For most six-year-olds drafting occurs in spurts – they write a few lines, read them silently or aloud, talk about what they will write next, and write some more. They continue this process for forty minutes or more. Some children write a text of several pages without a pause.

Revising

Reading aloud a draft frequently leads to independent revision. Hearing his own words helps a first grader detect omitted or repeated words. Using the deletion symbol (ℓ) and the carat (^) the child is usually able to delete and add words to the appropriate places in the text independently.

All other revisions occur after conferences with the teacher when the child has talked more or responded to questions about his story. Most children will write this new information at the end of the text. Some will squeeze it into an appropriate part of the text if there is space to write. Only a few will insert or reorder information with the cut and paste method.

Editing

First grade writers rarely independently edit their own pieces. Most editing is done with the teacher if a particular piece is selected for "publication".

Sharing

Six-year-olds love to read their writing aloud. Their order of audience preference begins with the teacher who ranks first; next they like to read to an entire class (their own or another), and last, but still desirable as a listener, is a classmate. As first graders read aloud, they imitate the story

telling style of the teacher. They like to sit on a chair with their classmates clustered together on the floor in front of them. They will interrupt their reading whenever an illustration appears and display it to the audience.

LEVELS OF EXPECTATIONS: WHAT FIRST GRADERS KNOW AND DO WHEN THEY WRITE

Level 4

Develops a story in an interesting or imaginative way

Imitates the style and language of children's literature

Focuses broadly around one subject, organizing ideas logically accordingly to time sequence; occasionally uses "chapters" to show related but separate events

- Uses dialogue and description

Attempts an ending: "then we were happy"; "it was fun"

Begins to use more complex sentences "When I ...", "and they laughed because ..."

Demonstrates an awareness that a sentence represents a complete thought by occasionally using periods correctly

Experiments with sophisticated punctuation marks, such as quotation marks, exclamation points, commas and apostrophes

Uses a variety of transitional phrases: then, the next day, so, one night, an hour later

Uses some capital letters appropriately

Makes mechanical errors that do not interfere with communication to a reader

Level 3

Uses space predominantly for text; draws mainly to illustrate after writing or for a book cover page

Occasionally organizes text around a complete sequence of events surrounding one central subject - the beginning of the bed-to-bed story

Uses a title that reflects the main idea

Demonstrates an awareness of chapters; may use chapters inappropriately

Demonstrates an awareness of closure by writing "the end", "goodbye", or "I went home"

Occasionally uses punctuation and capital letters appropriately

Invents spellings that, although incorrect, reflect an awareness of sophisticated spelling patterns.

Makes mechanical errors that do not seriously interfere with communication to a reader

Level 2

Uses more space for text than for drawing

Expresses more meaning through the text than through the drawing

Creates an appropriate title

Writes several complete thoughts as a sequence of events relating to the central idea of the text

Demonstrates a sense of closure by writing "the end"

Frequently connects the sequence of events with "but" or "and" without any punctuation

Rarely uses dialogue or supportive details

Uses capitals and lower case letters appropriately when writing own name; frequently begins words in text with capitals

Spells several words correctly; writes vowels for most syllables in words; writes vowels that phonetically represent sounds

Level 1

Makes drawings that dominate the page

Creates a title that relates to some event in the text

Writes one or two complete thoughts about the meaning of the drawing

Invents most spellings using beginning, medial and ending letters; frequently the letters correspond to the phonetic spelling

Spells several words correctly

Frequently demonstrates word sense by separating words with spaces

Uses capital letters inappropriately

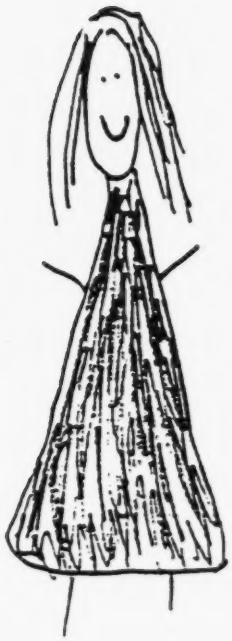
Adds brief phrases after a verbal response to questions

Decodes invented spellings immediately after writing in order to communicate meaning

WRITING SAMPLES

The following first grade writing samples represent four ability levels and illustrate that limited experience with written language need not be a barrier to effective communication. As you read their pieces, marvel at the fact that these young children have been using abstract symbols to represent language for a very short time.

Level 1



HAPPY
BARDAY
Book

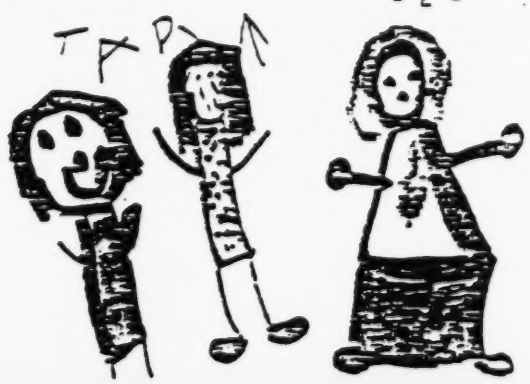
Happy Birthday Book

- 1 -

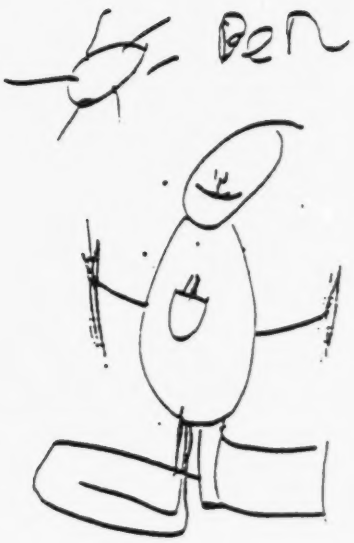
I AM AT MY HOS HSEG
APTCEE
MIE FAND IS KRG
FOR E MOMM
ME AND MI MUM
GRANMA RWNWEEE

I Am At My house having
A Party My frienc is Cry
for her Mommy We and My
Mom came there When We
Came There:

- 2 - CAM



Level 2



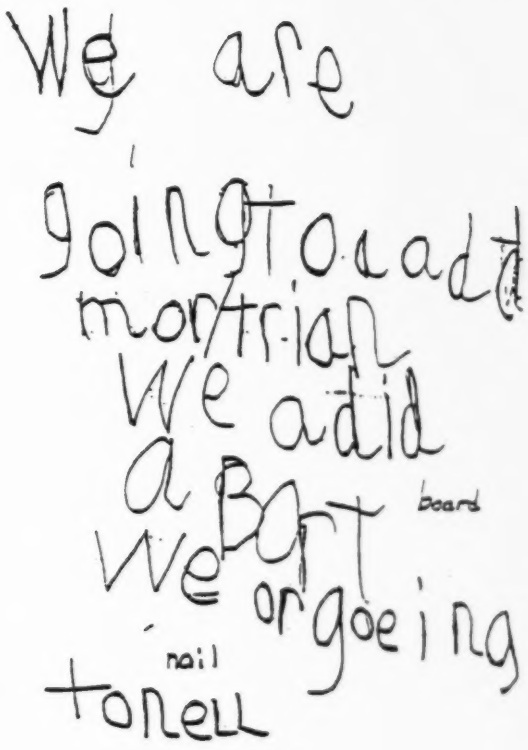
- 1 -

- 2 -

My daddy went to a meeting.
he brought back a toy.
it was a toy train.

- 3 -

I liked that toy train.
I added more tracks

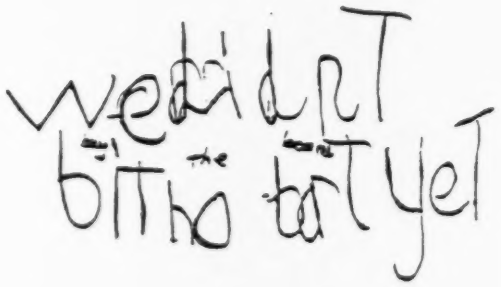


- 4 -

We are going to add more train
We added a board
We are going to nail...

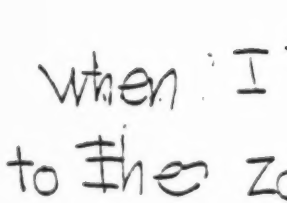
- 5 -

tracks to the board



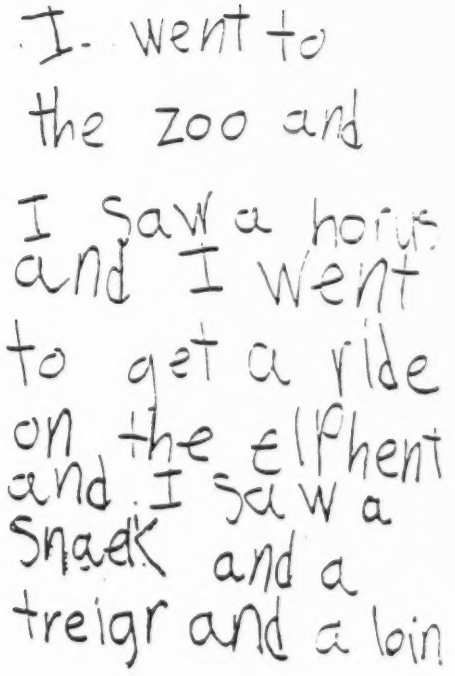
- 6 -

We didn't buy the board yet



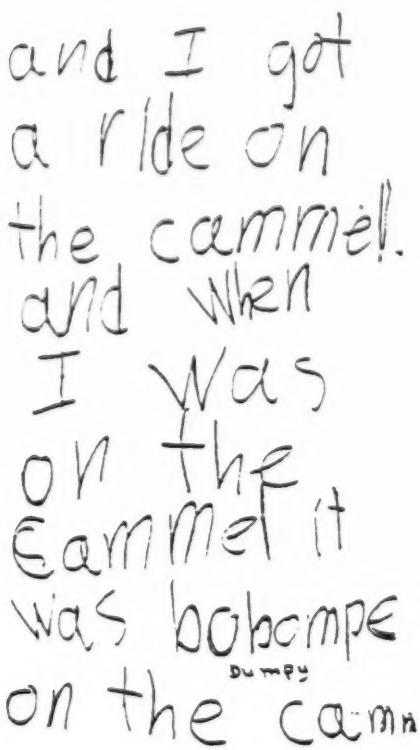
- 1 -

when I went to the zoo



- 2 -

I went to the zoo and
I saw a horse
and I went to get a ride
on the elephant
and I saw a
snake and a tiger and a lion



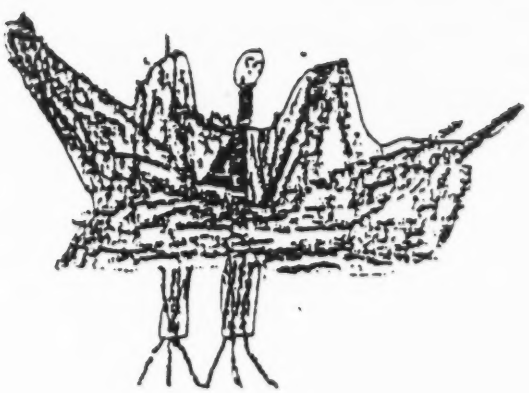
- 3 -

and I got a ride on the camel.
and when I was on the camel
it was bumpy on the camel

and this is
the pirtre of
the cammel.

- 4 -

and this is the picture of the camel.



the end

- 5 -

the end

a Mack Baleve story

a spooky story

hollewn night and the hontet house

- 1 -

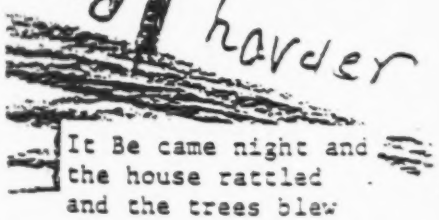
Chaptaer

Once ther was a house aur avery spooky house. IT hade all spooky things

Once there was a house
But a very spooky house.
it had all spooky things

- 2 -

It ee came night and the house rateled and the trees Blow and The wind Blow harder and harder



It Be came night and
the house rattled
and the trees blew
and the wind Blew
harder and harder

- 3 -

and then it was Halloween and three little children were trick-or-treating

and then it was Hallowen and three little Childrin wher trickor treeting

- 4 -

and they see the house

and thay See the house

- 5 -

chapter 2
they
wated-
to go trick-
or trit ther

- 6 -

they wanted to go trick-or treat there

when thay went past the gate

- 7 -

The Door creaked open all by it self

- 8 -

When they got in side they said is anybody home

- 9 -

and then thay so a withe walking up stairs

- 10 -

and they laghted because thay

- 11 -

and they laughed because they

chapter 3
thaot
it was
onley a
Jocke

- 12 -

thought it was only a joke

But ner
the w-
turnd a
rord ard
serrd

- 13 -

But then the witch turned around and turned

one Boy into a frog and another a monKey

- 14 -

One Boy into a frog and another a monkey

Chapter 4 and the aril a rabbat

- 15 -

and the girl (into) a rabbit

and then they walked out and thay wizerd saw a

- 16 -

and then they walked out and they saw a wizard

Chapear

and thay Said can you help us = was a boy once and I was a boy too and I was a girl

- 17 -

and they said can you help us I was a boy once and I was a boy too and I was a girl

until that darn witch turned us into a frog a Monkey and a bunny So can you help us I will See what I can do

- 18 -

until that darn witch turned us into a frog a monkey and a bunny So can you help us I will see what I can do

and he did

- 19 -

and he did

Chapter #6

then thay went Back home

- 20 -

then they went Back home

the end

- 21 -

the end

Second Grade

Second graders are interesting people and writers. In kindergarten and first grade they had been restricted by efforts to gain control over their fine motor muscles and our intricate alphabetic code. Now two years older and with early writing experiences behind them, these children are eager to write and write and write.

Freed, they begin to put their speech on to paper. Their writing sounds like them! Filled with the lively lilt we call voice, their writings are fun to read. They know it, too, for now they begin to show a budding sense of audience awareness. "Listen to this," they plead to one and all throughout their writing process.

When second graders write about topics they care about, their communication is quite effective. Their enthusiasm for writing is undaunted.

CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS

1. Typical pieces contain 50 to 175 words. Less typical are the epics that go on for more than 500 words.

2. Although second graders mainly use simple sentences when they write, they now begin to combine sentences with conjunctions — and, but, so, because, when — creating complex sentences.

3. Pieces generally are organized according to a chronological sequence of events.

4. Most second graders prefer writing about personal experiences. They are involved with their surroundings and to them the "I" — the level of self — is all important. Most common topics include family incidents, pets, parties, gifts, trauma and trips. The ability to draw from memory real events and details supplies them with sufficient information to develop their pieces. The chronological sequence in which the events occurred in real life lends organization to their writing.

5. Some second graders prefer fiction. They write about mysteries, fairy tales, monsters, dreams and their favorite tv, movie and book characters. The fiction writing is usually less coherent than the personal writing, but it gains a richness of language and imagery that reflects the books they read and the films they see.

PRODUCT APPEARANCE

1. Most pieces do not include drawings or illustrations.

2. Frequently, second grade pieces fill one to three pages.

3. They choose lined paper for writing. Usually a line is left blank between each line of writing.

4. Their manuscript is generally uniform throughout the page. Some second graders continue to write large letters.

5. Final copies are legible and neat. Even first drafts are legible.

6. Their stories have titles; some at the top of the first page; others on a separate cover page with an illustration.

SIGNS OF LEARNING IN PROGRESS - DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS

1. Second graders want to tell the whole story, leaving nothing out. As a result the writing loses focus.

2. Some second graders are aware of this lack of focus, and try to remedy it by separating these events into different chapters. Sometimes these"chapters" contain no more than two or three sentences and lack sufficient information. At other times "chapters" may be two or more pages in length, each one still lacking focus.

3. Second graders write as they speak - imbuing their writing with voice. As a result, their writing contains less desirable speech patterns as well -- an over-abundance of "ands" and "thens" and grammatical errors such as these:

   "It should of"; "I mean like I got the biggest chocolate bar and everything"; "Like one day she got more candy than me".

4. A second grader has many words in his speaking vocabulary that he does not have in his writing vocabulary. He must invent spellings as he stretches his writing vocabulary to include the new words. He writes "ataintoin" for attention; "itvamages" for advantages; and "fermigor" for familiar.

5. The second grade writer uses dialogue; he writes longer pieces; his sentences are more complex. All of this requires him to use more types of punctuation than ever before. He may learn the period first, but his favorite is the exclamation point. It appears often throughout his writing and it frequently serves as the ending of a piece.

6. Because the length of the second grader's text often exceeds one-hundred words, self-editing and recopying are difficult tasks. Many errors remain.

WRITING PROCESS

Rehearsing

Second graders seem to be exploring a wide range of rehearsing experiences. These seven year olds interact and share ideas with each other. They question each other. They carefully consider the suggestions classmates offer. They begin to consider and consciously make choices such as "How shall I begin?"... "What will I say?"... "How will I say it?"

Drafting

As second grader's draft, they put their ideas down on paper. They accept the temporary nature of writing as they cross out and insert words into their drafts. A child who has drafted a page or a part of a page will often stop writing to read the piece aloud. He will then rehearse again by talking about what he will write next. Rehearsal may occur several times during the drafting stage.

Revising

Second graders are beginning to have a sense of audience awareness, and to understand that the purpose of revising is to make a piece better and clearer for the reader. They independently make additions, deletions of several words and reorganize their writing into chapters. Most revisions involving cutting, stapling and taping in extra lines are rarely carried out

Editing

Second graders begin to edit their own pieces. Independently they attempt to use end punctuation marks correctly, capitalize the first letter of each sentence and indicate misspelled words. This first attempt leaves many mechanical errors uncorrected. Effective editing occurs with a teacher's help.

Sharing

Second graders love to share their writing with their classmates as well as their teacher. They are able, when asked, to share their writing processes --- to talk about changes they made after a conference with the teacher, reading the "before" and "after". The second grade audience listening to the stories can talk about parts they particularly liked and give reasons for their selections. They describe these selections as being "funny", "interesting", or having "lots of details".

LEVELS OF EXPECTATIONS: WHAT SECOND GRADERS KNOW AND DO WHEN THEY WRITE

Although the writing of second grade students reflects a range of abilities, there is less diversity than in earlier grades. An overwhelming majority create texts and draw only to illustrate the text. All attempt to develop a topic with some sort of narrative. Labelling of pictures as the sole writing content rarely occurs.

There are differences in writing skills - at the lower end of the range, the invented spellings and mechanical errors are such that they interfere with communication to a reader other than a teacher who can crack the code. At the upper end of a class range, writing with invented spellings that closely approach conventional spellings is easily understood.

Topic development ranges from little more than a listing of events that we see in the writing of younger children to pieces that are focused, organized with a sense of completeness and alive with the voice of the writer - writing that would be the envy of their older schoolmates.

We attempt in the following chart to illustrate many of the differences and similarities we see in the writing of second graders. By the end of the year the criteria listed for levels two and three reflects the writing abilities of most second graders.

Level 4

Writes lively interesting or imaginative stories

Fiction frequently shows influence of literature

Focuses on a single subject; occasionally organizes piece into chapters to create focus

Creates a title that reflects a focus and attracts readers

Organizes a complete story with a beginning a middle and an ending

Frequently uses description, action and dialogue effectively

Occasionally uses passage of time as transitions between events. ("An hour later ..", "In the morning .."). Also uses "then"

Occasionally uses capitals, periods, question marks, quotation marks, and apostrophes appropriately

Makes some mechanical errors that do not interfere with communication

Level 3

Attempts to develop a topic fully, often generating several pages of relevant and irrelevant information

Creates a title that focuses on the main idea

Frequently attempts to organize long narratives into "chapters" with appropriate titles; chapters may be similar to paragraphs or may be entire topics in themselves

Creates effective beginnings or leads that reflect influence of literature ("One dark night .." or "Once upon a time ..")

Writes an ending that has some sense of completion; usually adds "the end"

Occasionally combines action, description and dialogue effectively

Expresses feelings with exclamation points as well as descriptive words (I was scared!)

Occasionally capitalizes beginning letter of sentence and names

Spells 80-90% of total number of words correctly; invented spellings show awareness of sophisticated spelling patterns

Frequently can recognize and indicate misspellings

Makes mechanical errors that do not interfere with communication

Level 2

Develops a topic in chronological sequence with forty or more words

Uses supportive details; as the narrative grows in length, irrelevant details appear and the piece often loses focus

Frequently begins each thought or sentence with "and" or "and then" to connect events

Occasionally attempts to include dialogue; may lose coherence with excessive use of dialogue that fails to identify any speakers

Demonstrates an awareness of punctuation by using periods, often inappropriately

Occasionally uses exclamation points and larger print for emphasis

Uses simple sentence patterns as well as more complex sentences beginning with "When .."

Makes mechanical errors that occasionally interfere with communication

Level 1

Attempts to develop a topic with a listing of events that fills part of a page

Attempts to organize events in chronological sequence; occasionally ends with an exclamation point or writes "the end."

Creates a title that generally reflects the main idea

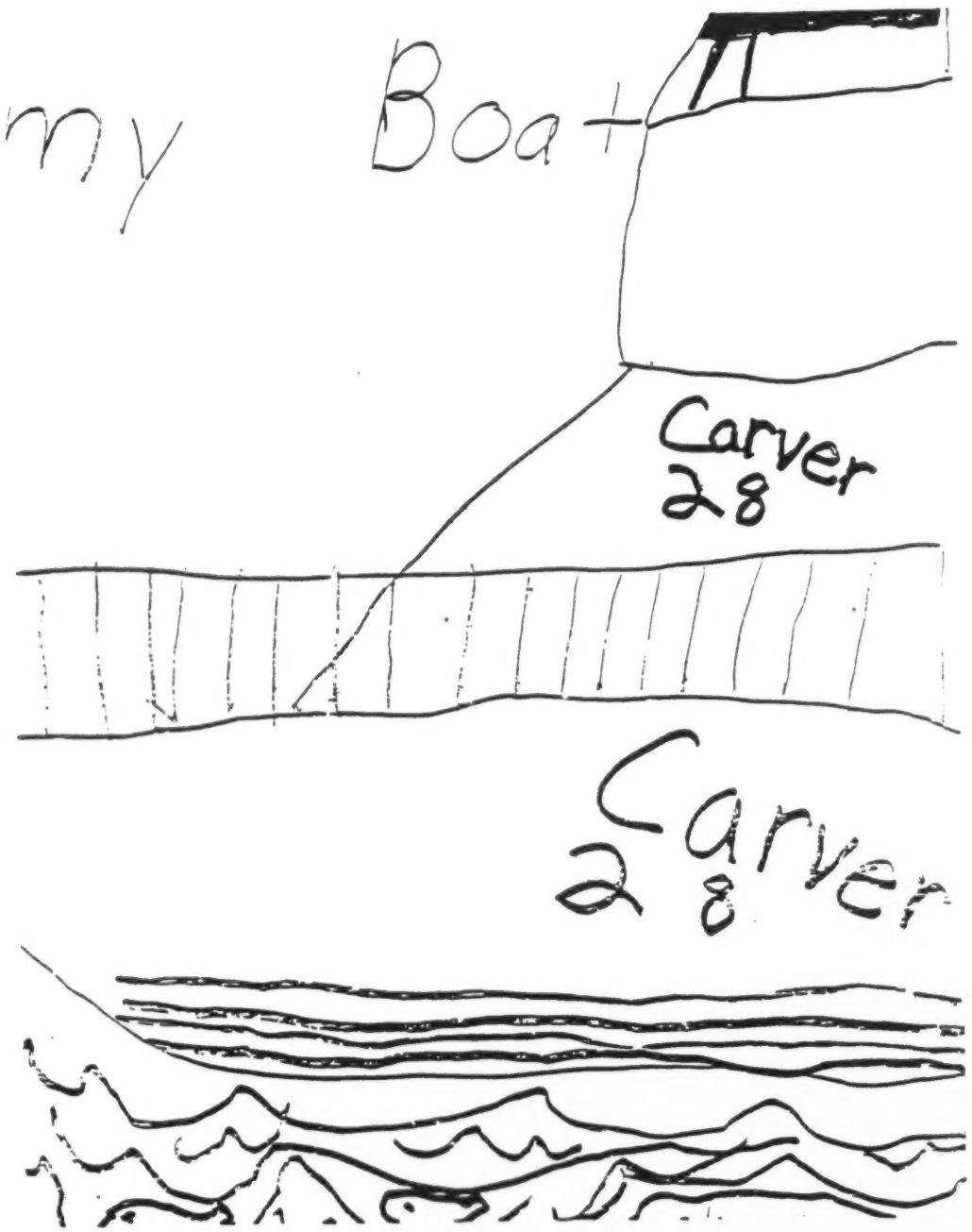
Frequently writes with simple sentence patterns without punctuation; ideas may be incomplete

Often repeats phrases or words

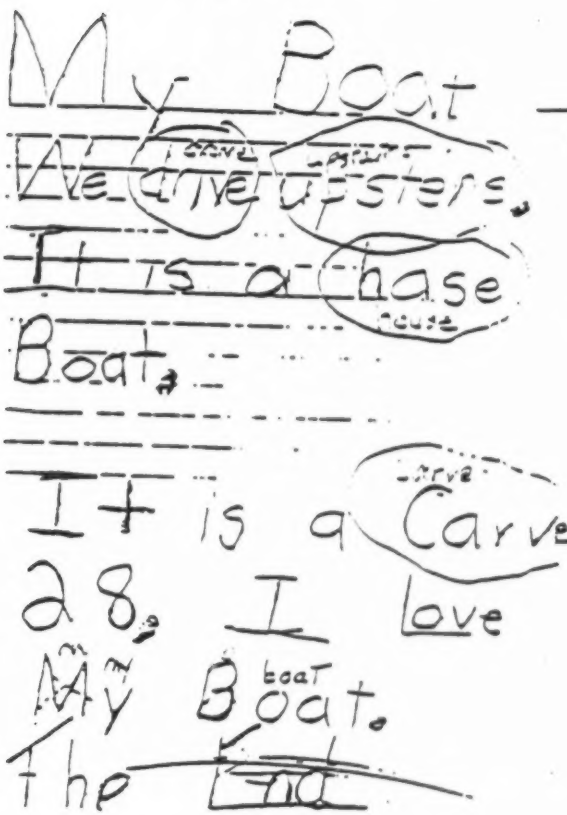
Makes mechanical errors that interfere with communication

WRITING SAMPLES

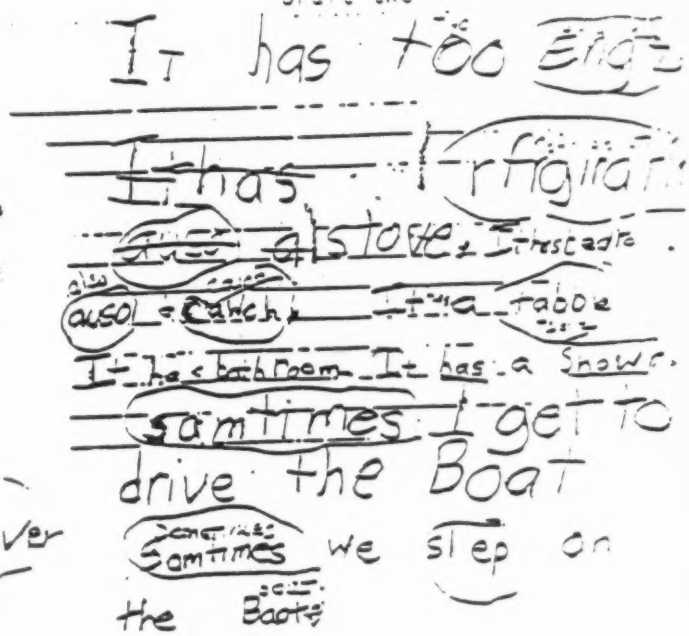
The following samples of children's writing illustrate the range of performance found at the second grade level. We have attached drafts which show the original texts before revisions to level one.


my Boat
Carver 28
Carver 28

Draft one



Draft two

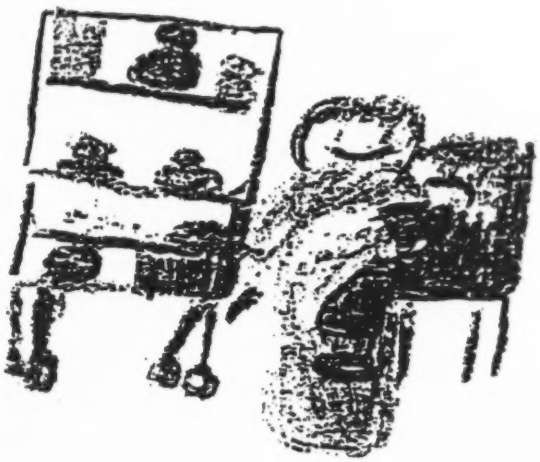


Final copy

We drive upstairs
It is a house
boat. It has two
engins refrigerator
Orestave.
It has a bed room
auso a couch.
Ithas a tble. Orebath
Room. Shower. Sometimes
we sleep on the boat

Level 2

Getting a Shot



- 1 -

Once I had to have a shot. I was afraid. My father said, "It will be all right. I wasn't sure. Then he said 'The needle isn't big.'

- 2 -

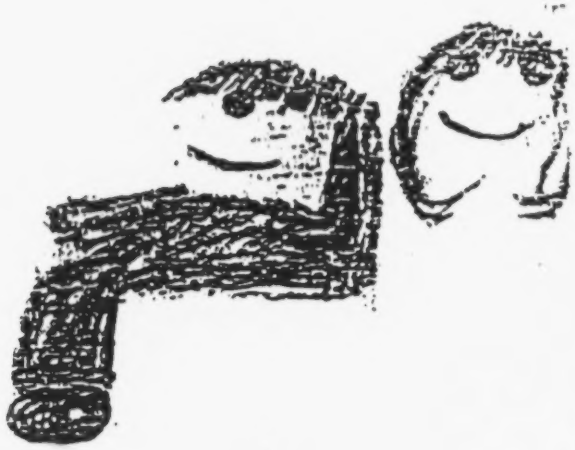
I was bored in the car. I seemed to be falling asleep.

- 3 -

When I woke up I found myself in a room. There were bottles. There were also medicines.

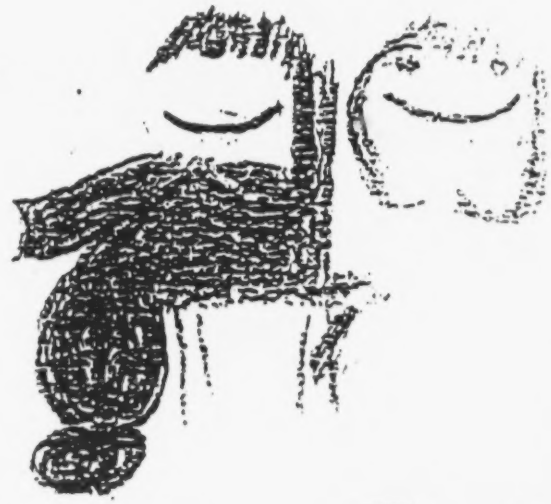
- 4 -

I could see a woman, I didn't know that she had a needle in her hand because



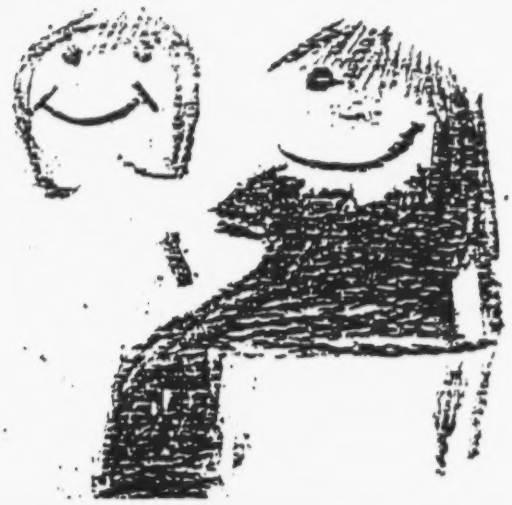
- 4 -

When I could see the needle I didn't want to get the shot.



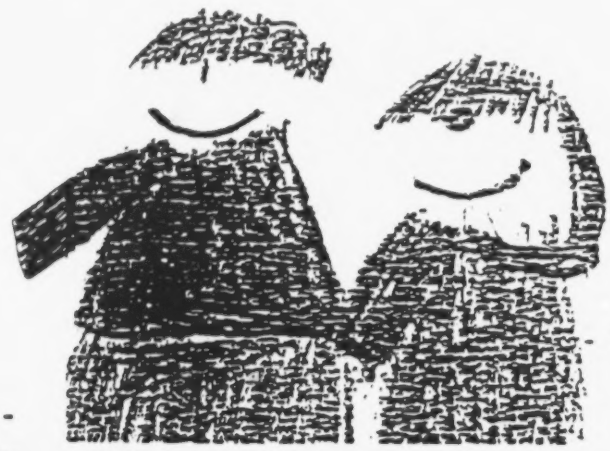
- 5 -

But it happened so quickly I coudent convince my father it would hurt.



- 6 -

the shot hurt I said Ouch I was glad the shot was over.



- 7 -

Level 3

The Scare

One day when was Sunday my family had been invited to a friend's house. We were invited because the grandma of our friend had to go away. Well anyway let me get to the point. It all happened at a friend's house. We were eating lunch at two o'clock in the afternoon. Then my brother said, "Mama, guess what!" my mother said, "What"? Then my brother answered, "I scared Baci twice" my mom said, "Don't do that" but my brother went to scare Baci anyway. Then the strangest thing happened! This time Baci wasn't scared. It was my brother who was scared. Then Baci tried to jump, my father put his arm up but Baci jumped higher than my father's arm and the claws were into the rim of my brother's right eye. We went to the hospital and he also had to have medicine. He also had to put eyedrops in his eye. My brother was scared but he did what they told him to do. And if you don't know who Baci is then I'll tell you. He's a dog.

The King's Problem

Once there was a king. He had a problem. The problem was that something was stealing his treasure. Evrey night a piece of gold was missing. So he called in

his three sons. He sent the oldest son to guard the treasure. He walked back and forth for about one hour. Then he fell

fast asleep. In the morning the king came outside and asked, Did you see anything, Peter?" Peter said, "I was up all night but I did not see anything." Then he

sent out the middle brother. He strolled back and forth about for a half an hour. Then he fell asleep. When the king came out he asked

Jacob if he had seen anything Jacob said, "Nothing father sorry. Then he sent out the youngest son. His name was Josh. He walked back and forth for

- 5 -

three hours. Then he saw a bird, a firebird. It stole a piece of treasure Josh grabbed the firebirds tail. A feather came out and it got away In the morning Josh

- 6 -

- 7 -

told the king what happened. He made the three brothers look for the firebird. Josh caught it. The king kept it as a prize to show everybody how brave his youngest son was. The end.

Third Grade

Something surprising happens to the writer upon entering third grade. He loses his voice. In earlier years he wrote the way he spoke, and this "naturalness" enlivened his writing.

Now the writing no longer resembles the child's speech; it is careful and factual. These writers are beginning to sense the power they hold over the text. Errors must go, particularly the invented spellings. Messiness simply will not do, not even in the first draft. Because they know that longer texts increase the writer's chances of making more mistakes, these children often choose to play it safe and limit the amount they write so they can make it look good.

The following piece illustrates the safe, but bland writing that many children produce early in third grade:

> When I was about five or four I went to my friend's house. We played on her boat and I fell off the boat on my way down. I broke my arm. My dad brought me to the hospital. They gave me a sleeping pill. I didn't want to go to sleep. So I stayed up when they put my cast on. When they were done my dad took me home.

The writer is concerned about telling the whole truth of this unfortunate event; yet without a more vivid description of how the accident happened, the conversation --- perhaps cries and screams ---, the feelings of fear and pain, the story falls flat. The fact that the spelling, handwriting, and capitalization are largely correct, tells us how important these mechanics are to the writer. Writing more would certainly invite errors, and many eight-year-old writers are unwilling to risk that without much reassurance and encouragement from their teachers.

Audience awareness is another factor that may contribute to the child's desire to produce safe writing. For many third graders the need to be accepted, or the fear of being different, may prevent them from revealing much more than the bare facts and shyness quiets their writing.

All is not lost. Along with the growing ability to control many of the conventions of writing comes a greater power to control other qualities of good writing. Third graders learn to appreciate specific details, attractive leads, and dialogue when they hear pieces of writing read aloud and discussed. Desirous of making their own writing, as good as those they have heard, they consciously begin to revise the content to include some of these qualities. It is in third grade that we see the first real burst of energy for revision.

After responding to a teacher's questions, most children will readily make changes by adding and deleting words, phrases, and sentences. Some children, when writing on a "hot" topic, one that they particularly care about, are willing to spend weeks reshaping a piece. Almost all third graders who are given response will find ways to considerably improve their compositions.

CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS

1. When third graders select topics they most often write about their accidents, trips, families, pets, special occasions such as birthdays and holidays, and personal successes with sports and concerts.

2. These youngsters like to write in different genres. They particularly enjoy writing content area reports which tell all about a subject. They like to add sections to reports and stories such as All About the Author and a Table of Contents. Many third graders like to write on imaginative topics. They feel their own lives are not exciting and are inspired, instead, to write about strange creatures, treasures, television characters, and animals.

3. Many third grade pieces lack focus. When writing they include a chain of details and events. Nothing is emphasized; everything is given equal weight.

4. Third graders often use chapters as a way of focusing when they are dealing with a topic that is too broad. Some "chapters" are often no more than a paragraph.

5. Order is important to many third grade children and events in their writing must be sequentially correct.

6. Their pieces are readily understandable and make sense. For a period of time in third grade their writing may be characterized as rather matter of fact with an absence of feelings, opinions, and voice.

7. Third graders create interesting and attractive titles for their pieces.

PRODUCT APPEARANCE

1. Pieces often contain drawings or illustrations usually added after the pieces were written.

2. Third graders' manuscript writing is usually uniform in size and correctly formed throughout the piece.

3. When they use manuscript in a first draft, they often leave spaces between lines, writing on every other line. This enables them to add information neatly without "messing up" the page.

4. For most third graders this is the first year of cursive writing. Many letters are still formed incorrectly. The spacing between letters and between words is often irregular and some words may not be legible.

5. Capitals are usually present at the beginning of sentences. The correct use of capitals for other conventions is inconsistent.

6. Although several sentences may be correctly punctuated with appropriate end marks, this is not done consistently throughout a piece of writing. Other marks of punctuation – the comma, apostrophe, and quotation marks – occasionally appear, but may be inappropriately used. The longer the text, the more errors appear.

SIGNS OF LEARNING IN PROGRESS: DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS

1. Often, before teacher-child interaction occurs, the writing of eight and nine-year-olds lacks interest. The lilt of their oral language is not present in their pieces. At the beginning of the year their main interest is in the correctness of conventions. They are struggling to perfect their spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and handwriting. A neat appearance ranks high on their list of good writing criteria.

2. Many third grade pieces lack focus. The writers are literal and factual and want to include every detail, giving none particular weight and skipping over nothing.

3. Third graders divide their pieces into chapters. Often these chapters are no more than a few lines or they may include several topics. These youngsters are attempting to focus and separate different events and ideas. For them, the "Chapter" is the beginning of paragraph awareness.

4. Enthusiastic to learn the right thing to do, third graders tend to overuse and overdo. Dialogue, sound effects, the use of quotation marks and exclamation marks are subject to such overuse.

5. Trying to repeat past successes, or to perfect what they have written previously, these youngsters will occasionally repeat the same themes when asked to select a topic for a new writing piece.

For third graders this is a year of transition. There may be wide variation within a piece and from piece to piece for the same child. These eight and nine-year-olds experience peaks, valleys, and plateaus while they develop and grow as young writers.

WRITING PROCESS

Rehearsing

Although third graders don't spend as much time on rehearsal as do children in the earlier grades, they will still confer with the teacher or classmates on topic selection. For some, the selection of a title is enough to give them a clear direction of how they want to begin a piece.

Drafting

Most third graders write the entire draft all the way through to the end without stopping to read what they have written. There is seldom a shift of functions from writing to reading and back again to writing.

Drafting is a slow process for many third graders who strive for correct spellings and neat handwriting.

Revision

At the beginning of the year many of these youngsters will write a draft and claim the piece is "finished". Gradually some become intrigued with cutting flaps or strips of paper on which they will write new information, then taping them into or next to the appropriate place in the text.

Most third graders revise by adding words, phrases, or sentences in the spaces between the lines of writing. Occasionally they omit some of these additions on the final recopied paper.

Children attempting to develop focus frequently divide a piece into chapters on their own. Some with help can delete irrelevant information. A few attempt new beginnings or leads; multiple drafts are rare.

Generally speaking third graders do not independently reread their writing and know what to do to improve it.

Most revisions that improve the quality of the writing come about as a result of a teacher's questions in a writing conference. However, not all conferences result in productive changes. Sometimes a child who has talked about something interesting and relevant, and received encouragement from a teacher, will later decide not to add that information to the story. What this youngster has become aware of is the writer's power to control his own text.

Editing

Eight-year-olds are in an editing mode. They care about correctness. This is an age when children are eager to edit their own and each other's writing for punctuation marks and capitals.

These youngsters are easily able to help other writers recognize and delete the repetitions of "thens" and "ands" at the beginning of sentences. Some are also able to change verb tenses to make them agree. Most find it difficult to replace bland words with vivid words. Those who use more vivid language in their writing also use it naturally when they speak.

During the editing process the teacher is involved with the child, teaching specific lessons applicable to the errors that occur in usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. For these youngsters, learning these skills is easiest when they can do it within the context of their own writing.

Although many errors are corrected during the recopying, some reappear in the final copy, along with new ones. There is rarely such a thing as the perfect paper.

Sharing

Third graders respond to pieces read aloud by their classmates with many specific, encouraging comments. Following a pattern set by their teacher, they may make remarks such as these: "I liked the way you ended the story when you said you want to go back to Disneyworld again."; "That's a great lead."; "I loved the word you used to describe your dog."

LEVELS OF EXPECTATIONS: WHAT THIRD GRADERS KNOW AND DO WHEN THEY WRITE

Level 4

Develops the topic in an interesting or imaginative way

Can narrow a topic or divide lengthy pieces logically into balanced chapters

Organizes piece with a good lead and ending

Expresses ideas coherently

Develops ideas with a variety of support material, - using examples, reasons, dialogue, details, explanations, feelings, opinions that are relevant and appropriate

Attempts to create humor or suspense

Occasionally uses comparisons

Uses some sentence variety

Makes some mechanical errors which do not interfere with communication

Level 3

Develops the topic with sufficient, relevant, support material; tells all about a topic leaving nothing out; occasionally uses chapters to separate different sections or events of the story

Organizes events in chronological sequence

Begins to use descriptive words: adjectives and adverbs

Includes dialogue, feelings and opinions

Uses compound sentences

Level 2

Develops a topic with support material that frequently includes digressions creating unfocused, "bed-to-bed" stories

Attempts to develop focus through chapters; frequently chapters are inappropriate or unbalanced

Organizes chronologically; demonstrates some sense of closure at the end

Creates titles that relate to the topic

Usually expresses ideas clearly

Occasionally demonstrates some sentence sense; uses end punctuation marks inconsistently.

Begins to use complex sentences: "When I was ..."

Begins to use transitional phrases to connect events. "The next day ..."

Continues to connect details or events with "then", "and", or "so"

Makes mechanical errors which do not interfere with communication

Level 1

Attempts to develop a topic with some support material

Uses several details, some irrelevant

Creates a title that is somewhat related to the topic

Organizes chronologically, beginning with "I went to ---"; ends without closure

Uses simple sentences; frequently uses "then" or "and" to connect events

Occasionally omits or repeats words

Frequently uses inappropriate or incorrect language

Makes mechanical errors which occasionally interfere with communication

WRITING SAMPLES

We would have liked to include with the writing samples that follow many more pieces to represent the diversity of third grade writers.

It is not a simple task to divide these writers into distinct ability levels. One can easily recognize superior or less-than-able writing, but when studying the writing of the majority of third graders, there appears to be a greater diversity of skills than found at other grade levels. One student may write with greater clarity and more complex sentence structure than another child; yet the writing of the second child may be more conventionally correct.

Christmass in the city

This christmas vacation I went to this city and my mom and I went in a carriage. It was a nice view. It took about sixty to minutes. We went around Central Park. It was cold.

When I had a black eye

When I was five I went skiing with an instructor. I went down a hill and when I got down I fell. Someone skied over my face. My dad said I had a black eye. He took me to the hospital. the person at the hospital said I had a black eye and my dad already had a blackeye and my dads eye was healing. The next day I had to go to School with a black eye.

Birthday Presents and Snowhite

for my birthday my friends and I watched Snowhite. for one present I got a bald Cabbage Patch Kid. It was a boy but I changed it into a girl. The boys name was Hector Reed. Now her name is Victoria Rina she has blue eyes and she's bald. After my birthday my brother got a bald Cabbage Patch Kid also. Two days later my mother got my brother another Cabbage Patch Kid.

Birthdax Presents and Snowhite

After my party I went to my Grand mothers house to play with my cousin. I brought a few toys there. My cousins name is Linda. We played with each other. When I got home I played all my toys in the Attic. Then I played with my brother. It was a fun day!

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Wayside Cottage

I walked into the house that used to be a tavern over 200 years ago. The stairs talked to me. They told me that it hurt to be walked on for so many years. I went into one room and saw that the British were coming. As I looked out of a belly bender window. I also saw the dirt roads that had horses and carriages on it. I looked behind the house and saw a blacksmiths shop.

I opened the closet and saw a trap door leading to the other side of the road. I was amazed what a great idea for hiding if there is a war. The tour ended when I heard a bus go by.

Level 4

My Second Concert

I passed the audition! I would be playing in the Hoff Barthelson Music School monthly concert. The concert was at 8:00. And I was nervous. Suddenly it was seven o'clock, and my heart started beating faster. When it was time, I walked inside the room where the players sit before the concert. The director of the schod took us into the

auditorium where people play. It was coming closer. 4 people to wait for. 30 mins. I slowly arose from my chair and nervously walked

down the aisle. I took a deep bow, and slowly walked to the piano & then started to play the piece & learned & kept on saying in my head, "Careful Jon don't goof up on the piece" & then remembered that the director said to me, "Come back the aisle smiling--" And that was just what I did.